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SENATE BILL 2342 By
Dixon

HOUSE BILL 2300
By DeBerry L

AN ACT to enact the Alternative Certification Act, and to amend
Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Alternative Certification Act".

SECTION 2.

(a) The state board of education shall by written policy provide for the certification and employment as teachers of persons who do not hold teaching certificates issued by the state.

(b) The policy shall provide for a person being certified to satisfactorily complete the following:

(1) an examination [NTE General Knowledge Test] for admission to a teacher education program to determine if the person's basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics are sufficient to perform satisfactorily as a teacher; and

(2) a one-year internship.

(c) To qualify under this act for an internship for certification to teach primary grades, a person must have a bachelor's degree in liberal arts, English, history, mathematics, life science, earth science, child psychology or a foreign language. The

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degree must be from an institution of higher education that is accredited by a recognized accrediting agency.

(d) To qualify under this act for an internship for certification to teach secondary grades, a person must have a bachelor's degree in the subject area for which certification is sought. The degree must be from an institution of higher education that is accredited by a recognized accrediting agency.

(e) The state board shall issue certification based on an evaluation of:

(1) the person's academic knowledge;

(2) the results of the examination required by subdivision

(b)(1) of this section;

(3) the person's ability to communicate information effectively to pupils; and

(4) the academic achievement of pupils taught by the person during internship.

(f) The board shall report the issuance of a certificate under this act to the commissioner of education.

(g) A person certified under this act is subject to all provisions of this code relating to teachers except a provision that requires a teaching certificate issued by the state.

(h) A local board of education may accept as certification within that district a certificate issued under this act.

(i) After the one-year provisional period the district must present the individual to the state certification board for full certification.

(j) The state shall certify those presented by the districts for full certification, if the requirements of subsection (b) have been satisfied.

(k) The board shall review every three (3) years the candidate submissions from the districts to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of the individual district programs.

SECTION 3. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to that end the provisions of this act are declared to be severable.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 1998, the public welfare requiring it.